

SERIES: 1999-2000
CIRCULAR LETTER: C-5

TO: Superintendents of Schools
In School Districts Required to Offer Bilingual Education

FROM: Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

DATE: September 10, 1999

SUBJECT: Required Certification Tests for Bilingual Education Certification

Section 4 of Public Act 99-211, An Act Improving Bilingual Education, which took effect as of July 1, 1999, requires that applicants for bilingual education certification demonstrate competency in English and the other language of instruction as a condition of certification. The State Department of Education has designated the Praxis I-CBT examination as the measure of English competency.

The Department has selected the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) as the measure of competency for Haitian-Creole, Lao, Polish, Portuguese, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish and Vietnamese which are the languages represented among the State's required programs of bilingual education. Albanian and Kurdish are not among the languages tested through the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview. A suitable procedure for testing competency in that language is currently being sought.

Applicants who need to demonstrate competency in one of the above languages tested by the ACTFL OPI are advised to contact Language Testing International (LTI), the ACTFL office which arranges official interviews, as soon as possible. To do so, applicants should do the following:

- Contact LTI. Telephone: (914) 948-5100. Fax: (914) 948-0794. Email: **languageti@aol.com**
- Request an application and information packet.
- Inform the representative that he/she is **applying for certification as a bilingual education teacher in the state of Connecticut** and must attain a level of **advanced mid-level** on the OPI. Name the language in which the interview will take place.
- Complete the application and follow all other procedures required by LTI.

Applicants will be required to include a payment of \$115 with their application. Interviews take from 15-30 minutes, may be done in person or over the telephone, are recorded, and are rated independently by two testers. Only OPI certificates that indicate a rating of “**advanced mid-level**” will be accepted as fulfilling this requirement for bilingual certification in Connecticut. The original test results must be submitted **by OPI directly** to the Bureau of Certification and Professional Development, P.O. Box 150471, Hartford, CT 06115-0471. Copies will not be accepted. The enclosed material will provide further details. For more information, contact ACTFL’s web-site at: **www.actfl.org**.

If you have any further questions regarding bilingual education certification, please contact Hilary E. Freedman, Acting Chief, Bureau of Certification and Professional Development. Questions may be sent by e-mail to: **teacher.cert@po.state.ct.us**.

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